

# Meeting Our Commitments

*Accountability report  
of the Government of Spain*

December 2021

**Appendix II.**

**Summary of Covid-19 initiatives**



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## 1. Measures supporting the health response

### General

- Amendment of the law so that the Supreme Court can examine and establish case-law on healthcare legislation that enables the authorities to set limitations or restrictions on fundamental rights despite the state of emergency having been lifted.
- Holding of 51 meetings by the National Health System's Interterritorial Council during 2021.
- Inclusion, in component 18 of the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan (RTRP), of the creation of the State Public Health Centre within the framework of the reform of the public health system.

### Vaccination

- Approval of up to nine updates to the Vaccination Strategy in the framework of the National Health System's Interterritorial Council.
- Distribution of 85.5 million vaccine doses to Spain's Autonomous Communities, thereby enabling them to administer 83.9 million doses. At 20 June 2021, 91.8% of the target population in Spain has received at least one dose of the vaccine. 89.7% of the target population has been fully vaccinated. 84.24% of people aged 70 or older have received a third dose; this percentage is 61.14% among people aged 60 to 69.
- Approval by the Public Health Commission of the recommendation to administer a booster dose to people aged 50 or older, starting with the older members of this group, and afterwards, people aged 40-49 may be administered booster doses. Booster doses will also be administered to persons considered of high risk, to healthcare and social care personnel, to nursing home residents, and to people who received the Janssen vaccine.

The Commission has also approved the administration of these booster doses to people under the age of 60 who received homologous AstraZeneca vaccination as their primary vaccination. The booster doses will be administered to this group three months after their latest dose.

- Approval of the inclusion of children aged 5-11 in the Covid-19 vaccination strategy. 3.3 million children of this age may thus receive protection against Covid-19.



- Distribution of more than 1.3 million paediatric vaccines to the Autonomous Communities and Autonomous Cities.
- Granting of aid to the Biofabri company totalling nearly 3 million euros (of which 300,000 euros was direct aid) to increase its capacity to manufacture the antigen of the NOVAVAX Covid-19 vaccine at its installations in Galicia. The European Medicines Agency has recommended that commercialization of this vaccine be authorized.
- Undertaking of a clinical trial to assess the option of administering the Pfizer vaccine, as a second dose, to people whose first dose was the AstraZeneca vaccine.
- Signing of a protocol to make it easier for the private health insurance companies that collaborate with the Social Security system to provide their human and material resources to help with the vaccination process.

### **Material, health and human resources**

- Increase in the volume of the strategic reserve of medicines, medical devices, and personal protective equipment, as well as of their storage and distribution.
- Update of the Covid-19 early detection, surveillance and control strategy.
- Update of the risk assessment indicators and alert levels for Covid-19 transmission.
- Implementation of measures enabling retired health professionals to voluntarily join health services, making their appointment compatible with their retirement pension. Measures have also enabled public and private healthcare centres to hire physicians and nurses to carry out healthcare duties relating to Covid-19 while keeping their retirement entitlements, thus guaranteeing the rights of retirees.
- Implementation, on an exceptional and transitional basis, of measures enabling the Autonomous Communities, INGESA (National Healthcare Management Institute) and the Ministry of Defence to hire health professionals with specialist qualifications obtained in non-EU-Member States who hold a report from the Assessment Committee.
- Retroactive recognition of contagion with Covid-19 as an occupational disease for health workers rendering services at health centres and social care centres who have contracted the virus.
- Extension until 30 June 2022 of a super-reduced 4% VAT rate on intra-EU deliveries, imports and purchases of disposable surgical face masks. And



- of a 0% VAT rate on healthcare materials to combat the coronavirus aimed at public entities, non-profit-making entities and hospitals.
- Distribution of over 50 million surgical face masks to social entities and to the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP), aimed at the most vulnerable people.
  - Organization of corridors to enable convoys of trucks to complete their itineraries and deliver their goods in order to guarantee the supply of items necessary for health reasons—especially of vaccines against Covid-19 and of food—and to ensure that personnel assigned to critical infrastructure and essential services were present in their places of work.
  - Development of digital health services, promoting the inter-operability of health data in the European and national spheres. Scorecards have been made available for monitoring the Comprehensive Vaccination Management Plan.

### **Mobility**

- Approval of the digital Covid certificate agreed jointly by the European Commission, the Council and the European Parliament. The certificate entered into force on 7 June in Spain and on 1 July in the EU. More than 38 million of certificates have been issued throughout 2021.
- Agreement to eliminate the limitations on access to airport terminals located in Spain.
- Modification of the criteria for the temporary restriction of non-essential travel from third countries into the European Union and Schengen partner countries.
- Establishment of exceptional measures to limit the spread of and contagion with Covid-19, with the limitation of direct flights and passenger ships between the United Kingdom and Spanish airports and ports; flights between the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Republic of South Africa and Spanish airports; and flights between certain countries in southern Africa and Spanish airports.
- Establishment of quarantine conditions for people coming from the Republic of India and other high-risk countries upon arriving in Spain.
- Establishment of health screening measures for international passengers to prevent the introduction of infection vectors for SARS-CoV-2 and its variants, with the aim of ensuring that, while maintaining the levels of security in the checks carried out on people arriving in Spain, especially



those coming from risk countries, these checks are carried out as efficiently as possible.

- Development of the Spain Travel Health-SpTH information system that will permit the verification of the digital certificates that may be activated in the framework of the European Union.

### **Protection and information**

- Establishment, on a temporary basis, of the mandatory use of face masks for people aged 6 or older in public outdoor spaces, regardless of the possibilities for social distancing, with certain exceptions, to combat the sixth wave of Covid-19.
- Strengthening of the Autonomous Communities' vaccination and tracing mechanisms with teams from the Armed Forces. Hospitals of the Military Healthcare Network have been made available to intensify and accelerate the vaccination process as a result of the sixth wave.
- Publication of Covid-19-related prevention, hygiene, and health promotion measures for universities in the 2021-2022 academic year.
- Approval of the use of medical devices for "in vitro" diagnosis, to regulate the retail sale and advertising of Covid-19 self-diagnosis products.
- Government approval of a certain degree of flexibility with regard to the use of face masks in outdoor spaces.
- Promotion by the National Health System's Interterritorial Council of coordinated response actions for controlling the pandemic.
- Establishment of the information and commercialization requirements regarding hygienic face masks.
- Launch of a mobile app improving the Face Mask Purchasing Guide and adding new functionalities, such as that of monitoring the product's usage.
- Description, in an agreement, of activities that are incompatible with the use of face masks.
- Approval, in the framework of the National Health System's Interterritorial Council together with the Sectoral Conference on Education, of the protocol on health and hygiene measures for a safe school year and for 100% face-to-face learning in 2021-2022, which can be adapted as the pandemic evolves.



- Updating of prevention, hygiene and health promotion measures against Covid-19 at universities, with a view, also, to preparing preventive measures against Covid-19 for the 2021 university entrance exams.
- Organization of three seminars in a local web environment in collaboration with the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces and the Spanish Network of Healthy Cities on: Covid-19 vaccination, pandemic fatigue, and community action on health.
- Publication of the Community Action on Health guide, in which different social and municipal agents and agents from the sphere of health have participated.

### **Research unrelated to vaccination**

- Agreement reached with the World Health Organization to grant an open licence for a Covid-19 test developed in Spain by Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) scientists.
- Approval of funding amounting to almost 15 million euros for phases IIb/III of the Spanish Hipra vaccine trials.
- Award to the CNM-ISCIII (National Centre for Microbiology - Carlos III Health Institute) of the “Improvement of Sequencing Infrastructure and Capabilities to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic” in the framework of the HERA (European Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority) initiative and the ECDC (European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control), which will strengthen these sequencing and variant analysis efforts.
- Development by CSIC of an ultrasound test to evaluate the effectiveness of anti-Covid face masks.
- Publication of three analysis reports on the effectiveness of vaccination throughout 2021 by the Directorate-General for Public Health, the National Epidemiology Centre of the Carlos III Health Institute, and the Spanish Agency for Medicines and Medical Devices, the latest on 17 December.
- Continuation of work by CSIC on three Covid-19 vaccine prototypes. The Spanish vaccine will foreseeably be put on the market in the second half of 2022.
- Approval of the Protocol for Integrating Genome Sequencing into SARS-CoV-2 surveillance.



- Participation by Spain, through ISCIII (Carlos III Health Institute), in a European project for research into variants of SARS-CoV-2 and vaccine development.
- Increase in the budget for ISCIII's Strategic Action on Health, and strengthening of the National Centre of Epidemiology and the National Centre of Microbiology.
- Financing by the Centre for Development of Industrial Technology (CDTI) of 24 corporate R&D&i projects dedicated to combating the pandemic.
- Promotion of data analytics that enabled the creation of predictive models for monitoring positivity to the SARS-CoV-2 virus in Spain.
- Initiation by ISCIII of the procedure for installing a Biosafety Level-4 laboratory, and creation of the National Centre for Advanced Therapies and of the Spanish Biobank Network.

### **Other measures**

- Presentation of the 2021-2024 Action Plan on Mental Health and Covid-19, which will have a financial allocation of 100 million euros, to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic.
- Donation to COVAX of more than 30 million doses of Covid-19 vaccines before the end of 2021, more than 7.5 million of which have arrived in Latin America, and presentation of the "Vaccines for All" non-paper focused on three pillars: transfer of knowledge and technology; increased production of vaccines at the global level; and faster distribution. Moreover, Spain has committed to continue donating up to 50 million doses of vaccines during the first quarter of 2022.
- Implementation of the procedure to apply for and issue digital Covid certificates of vaccination, of diagnosis and of recovery in the sphere of the Ministry of Defence.
- Approval of the distribution of 13 million euros aimed at improving the Public Health Surveillance Network.
- Decision by the Interterritorial Council to create a Digital Health Committee that will contribute to co-governance with the Autonomous Communities and the interoperability of all projects in this sphere.
- Approval of a plan for universal access to "vaccine solidarity" to contribute to the vaccination of the global population.



- Efforts are being made to obtain data on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Spain's national defence industrial base, to identify and evaluate the consequences of the health crisis for the sector and how it might affect its industrial capacities—paying particular attention to the areas of knowledge of strategic interest for defence—and, where applicable, to propose measures to counter any undesirable effects.

## 2. Employment and social measures

- Conclusion of three labour agreements protecting employment reached between the Government and social partners: Agreement IV in January, Agreement V in May, and Agreement VI in September. Thanks to these agreements, the furlough schemes (ERTEs) have been extended until 28 February 2022 as a mechanism for protecting jobs and avoiding other, external measures for providing greater flexibility. These Agreements entail a commitment to maintaining jobs and while availing of the aforementioned furlough schemes companies may not distribute dividends, nor dismiss workers on the grounds of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Extension of the MECUIDA plan, which sets forth measures for work-life balance, until 28 February 2022.
- Extension, until 30 November 2021, of the deadline for lessors and owners of housing affected by the extraordinary suspension measures to submit an application for compensation.
- Extension, until 28 February 2022, of the measures to protect the unemployed.
- Extension, until 28 February 2022, of the suspension of proceedings to evict tenants in vulnerable situations, of the extraordinary extension of lease contract periods and of the option to apply for a moratorium or partial pardoning of rental payments, when the lessor is a public company or public housing entity or is an owner of 10 or more properties.
- Extension, until 28 February 2022, of the guarantee of supply of water, electricity and natural gas to vulnerable consumers, which was conditional upon the state of emergency remaining in force. The time period corresponding to the right to a subsidized rate (*bono social*) has also been extended, as has the period for which these consumers are considered vulnerable.
- Maintenance, until 28 February 2022, of the consideration as essential services of public information services, advisory services, tele-assistance,



comprehensive social assistance, shelter for victims of all forms of violence against women, including victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, and the online monitoring system relating to gender violence.

- Extension, until 28 February 2022, of the period during which entertainers, technical and auxiliary personnel of the cultural sector, and bull-fighting professionals are entitled to unemployment benefit.
- Regulation of the direct award of grants to cinema owners.
- Establishment of a system of extraordinary assistance (i) to the sector engaged in the conservation-restoration of Spanish Historical Heritage, (ii) to contemporary Spanish art, and (iii) to the economic sector linked to museums and to heritage maintenance, as a consequence of the negative impact of the health crisis.
- Announcement of a decision to award grants totalling 10 million euros to basketball and handball clubs that were scheduled to participate in the ACB and ASOBAL Leagues during the 2019-2020 and/or 2020-2021 seasons. This is the first line of grants for sports clubs awarded by the National Sports Council (CSD) to mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the revenue generated by ticket sales for sports events in recent months.
- Amendment of the minimum income scheme, extending its coverage to a greater number of people and to include situations not initially envisaged.
- Extension of the interruption of the calculation of the duration of suspended temporary contracts.
- Granting of permission to furloughed taxpayers to settle any personal income tax payable in instalments.
- Regulation of remote working in the Justice Administration, followed by the formalization of an agreement with the trade unions of the sector: STAJ and CCOO.
- Formalization with the trade unions of the general principles for greater adoption of remote working in the General State Administration. Remote working will be voluntary and reversible, and any personnel who opt to work remotely will have the same rights and duties as personnel working on site.
- Adoption of measures aimed at streamlining the processing of citizens' Social Security applications and at preventing delays in the recognition of benefits to which they may be entitled.



- Extension of the moratorium period granted to families on mortgage and non-mortgage debt, improving the sufficiency of their resources.
- Extension of the periods during which people living in rental property as their main residence can have access to loans guaranteed and subsidized by the State.
- Approval of a regulation establishing the procedure for the use of the resources of the 2018-2021 National Housing Plan to award compensation to housing property owners in certain circumstances involving the suspension of evictions of tenants in vulnerable situations with no alternative accommodation options during the pandemic.
- Renewal of associate professors' contracts, exempting them—on an exceptional basis—from the requirement to provide accreditation of having carried out a non-university-related activity during the 2021-2022 academic year.

### **Specific measures aimed at self-employed workers**

- Extension, until 28 February 2022, of the extraordinary benefit for cessation of activity for self-employed workers.
- Introduction of measures making it easier for self-employed workers who pay tax following the objective assessment method to receive the benefit for cessation of activity, on considering, in principle, that their revenues will have fallen, eliminating the requirement to provide evidence of said fall in revenues.
- Exoneration of self-employed workers from the obligation to pay Social Security contributions from the first day of the month in which they applied for the extraordinary benefit for cessation of activity.

## **3. Economic reactivation measures**

### **General measures**

- Establishment of an extension during the 2021 tax year of the exclusion of losses incurred in 2020 as a criterion for the dissolution of limited companies, to help curb the economic impact of the health crisis by giving companies additional time, as well as access to public or private financing, enabling them to gradually recover their ordinary activity.
- Extension, until 31 December 2022, of the suspension of the liberalization scheme for foreign investments, in certain sectors, from EU and EFTA (European Free Trade Association) countries in listed



- companies in Spain, or in unlisted companies if the investment exceeds 500 million euros.
- Continued validity, until 30 June 2022, of recapitalization funds for companies managed by SEPI (State-owned Holding Company) and COFIDES (State-owned Trading Company).
  - Extension, until 30 June 2022, of the moratorium on the automatic triggering of insolvency proceedings, in order to give those companies experiencing the greatest difficulties as a result of the pandemic additional time in which to restore their equity balance, thus preventing avoidable insolvency proceedings.
  - Approval of the 2021-2022 Action Plan for the internationalization of the Spanish economy.
  - Regulation of the option, for those public limited companies that have not been able to amend their statutes, to continue to hold general shareholders' meetings online during 2021, provided that the identification of any shareholders exercising their right to vote is guaranteed and that shareholders are offered the option of participating in the meeting via different channels.

### **Direct aid, financial aid and guarantees**

- Extension, until 1 June 2022, of the deadline for companies and self-employed workers to apply for Guarantee Facilities; and, moreover, raising of the accumulated aid threshold, from 1.8 million euros to 2.3 million euros per beneficiary. In this context, 30 June 2022 has been set as the deadline for granting public guarantees to meet the liquidity and investment needs of companies and self-employed workers.
- Creation of a new line of direct aid furnished with 7 billion euros for self-employed workers and companies whose activity has been negatively affected by the pandemic and whose income has fallen by more than 30% with respect to 2019. This aid will be used to settle debts and to make payments to suppliers and other creditors.
- Activation of a 3 billion euros line of financing to enable the conversion into transfers of a certain volume of State guarantees for loans for those companies and self-employed workers hit hardest by the crisis.
- Creation of a new, 1 billion euro recapitalization fund to support companies that are viable but that are facing solvency problems due to the Covid-19 pandemic and that are not eligible to receive funding from SEPI. The terms regarding access to the initial fund have been modified



as regards the net consolidated turnover defining eligible medium-sized enterprises, and to eliminate the requirement of a 20% drop in turnover in 2020 with regard to 2019. Additionally, the minimum amount per beneficiary has been reduced in the case of SMEs.

- Extension to four months of the interest-free deferral of tax debts and extension of the repayment periods for public loans managed by the Secretariat-General for Industry and SMEs.
- Adoption of exceptional measures during 2021 and 2022 as regards the settlement of debt obligations with the State (excluding tax or customs duties), allowing debtors to defer loan repayments or to pay in instalments, and waiving the requirement for a guarantee.
- Extension of the application period and adaptation of the conditions regarding guarantees regulated in earlier legislation, and implementation of the scheme for collecting the guarantees executed.
- Decisions authorizing the Management Board of the Fund for Supporting the Solvency of Strategic Companies.
- Decision approving the Code of Good Practices for the renegotiation framework for clients with guaranteed financing provided for in prevailing legislation.

### **Sectoral measures**

- Approval of the creation of 56 judicial units corresponding to the 2021 programme, and of four posts of regionally appointed judges in order to alleviate the accumulation of lawsuits caused by the health crisis.
- Reactivation of all control and coordination measures with the Autonomous Communities, to minimize the health risks deriving from Covid-19 during the coming agricultural seasons.
- Approval of an Urgent Plan for the national aeronautical sector and publication of the first call for grant applications of the Technological Aeronautical Programme, with 35 million euros in grants.
- Improvement of the conditions of the financing awarded to the cultural sector by the Mutual Guarantee Society for the Audiovisual Sector.
- Extension of the periods for implementing projects financed by the Secretariat-General for Industry and SMEs, and for the loans awarded by Emprendetur to companies in the tourism sector, with the aim of strengthening companies' solvency.



- Approval of domestic legislation reflecting the flexibility introduced by the Common Agricultural Policy transitional regulation in respect of vine planting authorizations, with the aim of helping winegrowers to overcome the difficulties caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Adoption of vineyard restructuring and reconversion measures, investments in wineries and promotion in third countries, incorporating the new, more flexible scenario established in EU law.
- Extension of measures to restore the levels of activity recorded by the courts at the time of declaring the state of emergency.
- Implementation of a mechanism to offset the decline in income suffered in 2020 by urban public transport service operators as a result of the pandemic and of the measures adopted to contain the spread of the virus.
- Lifting of the ban prohibiting international cruise ships from docking at Spanish ports, with effect as of 7 June. In parallel, healthcare measures have been adopted to guarantee the safety of cruise ship activity.
- Roll-out of the "Travel safe" campaign.
- Launch of the "Te Mereces España" promotion campaign.

#### 4. Financial support and measures aimed at Spain's Autonomous Communities

- Approval of the distribution of the extraordinary 13.5 billion euros fund for Autonomous Communities for the funding of expenses related to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Extension, until 30 June 2022, of the deadline for the Autonomous Communities and the Autonomous Cities of Ceuta and Melilla to repay any unspent funds in the Covid Line of direct aid to companies and self-employed workers.
- Decision regarding the distribution of the Autonomous Communities Financing Fund for the last few quarters, amounting to 32.7 billion euros in 2021, to help them address the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, strengthening their liquidity and public services.
- Approval of the procedure and conditions for the different Autonomous Communities to avail of the new REACT-EU Liquidity Fund compartment, which will facilitate the use of the EU funds envisaged in the REACT-EU programme. The purpose of the 10 billion euros fund is to help the Autonomous Communities to strengthen the Welfare State, safeguard



public services, and reboot the economy following the impact of the pandemic caused by Covid-19.

- Development of different procedures to provide assistance from the 7 billion euro Covid Line. Specifically, the Ministry of Finance has published a Ministerial Order to distribute the funds between the Autonomous Communities and the Autonomous Cities of Ceuta and Melilla, and collaboration agreements have been sent.
- Extension of permission to the Autonomous Communities to award Covid Line subsidies to companies and professionals in sectors not initially considered to have been among those worst affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, provided that they have been affected in the territory of said Autonomous Community. In addition, assistance may be awarded to viable companies that incurred losses in 2019 or that have corporate income tax losses, as a result of exceptional circumstances.



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